

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough examination of the application. It is believed that no new matter is added to the application by this amendment.

Entry Of Amendment

Entry of this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 is respectfully requested because it cancels a claim and places the application in condition for allowance. Alternately, entry is requested because it places the application in better form for appeal.

Status Of The Claims

Upon entry of this Amendment, Claims 22-28 and 30-43 are pending in the application. Claim 29 is cancelled by this amendment. Claim 22 has been amended to improve its language and to incorporate the subject matter of claim 29. Claims 30 and 31 have been amended to improve their language. Claim 36 has been rewritten to stand as an independent claim. The Examiner acknowledges the allowability of claims 28-40 and 43.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) Over Longoria

Claims 22-27, 41 and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Longoria (U.S. Patent 4,948,726). Applicants traverse.

Claim 22 has been amended by incorporating the subject matter of allowable claim 29. Claim 29 (now cancelled) was free of this rejection over Longoria, and the incorporation of its subject matter into independent claim 22 renders it instantly allowable. Claims depending upon claim 22 are allowable for at least the above reasons.

This rejection is overcome and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Drawings

The Examiner is respectfully requested to indicate whether the drawing figures are acceptable in next official action.

Foreign Priority

The Examiner has acknowledged foreign priority in the Office Action mailed October 6, 2004.

Information Disclosure Statements

The Examiner is thanked for considering the Information Disclosure Statements filed March 22, 2002, June 24, 2002 and August 19, 2002, and for making the initialed PTO-1449 forms of record in the application in the Office Action mailed October 6, 2004.

Prior Art

The prior art cited but not utilized by the Examiner indicates the status of the conventional art that the invention supercedes. Additional remarks are accordingly not necessary.

Conclusion

The Examiner's rejection has been overcome, obviated or rendered moot. No issues remain. The Examiner is accordingly respectfully requested to place the application in condition for allowance and to issue a Notice of Allowability.

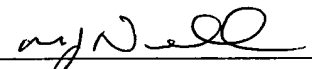
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert E. Goozner, Ph.D. (Reg. No. 42,593) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: September 6, 2005
(Tues. after Holiday)



Respectfully submitted,

By 
Mark J. Nuell, Ph.D.
Registration No.: 36,623
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Rd
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant